

Remarks

Claims 1-7 are pending. No claims are amended.

Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 1-6 are allowed.

Based on the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the outstanding rejections and passage of the claims to allowance.

§ 102 Rejections

Claim 7 was rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by Huebscher et al (US Pat. No. 5,042,902). Applicants traverse as follows.

Applicants respectfully submit that Huebscher does not disclose “a fiber-element securing device for securing an uncoated fiber element of an optical fiber” as is recited in claim 1. In contrast, Huebscher teaches an alignment sleeve, referred to as a capillary tube 24. This capillary tube 24 is not a securing member, it is merely a sleeve that allows the fiber ends to be brought into contact with one another. As explained by Huebscher at col. 3, lines 42 et seq.,

In accordance with one preferred aspect of the invention, the abutting fiber ends are locked into position within the capillary tube by an adhesive so that the splice is permanent. However, for some applications, e.g., laboratory applications, it may be desired that the splice be temporary (disconnectable). Thus, for those applications no adhesive is used. However, if desired, an optical index matched gel can be located at the interface of the abutting fiber ends to prevent any light from leaking out of the interface and to facilitate light transmission between the fiber ends. Otherwise the interface may be left dry.

Thus, in order to secure the fiber ends, an adhesive is used – the capillary 24 does not itself secure the fibers together. In contrast, as is claimed in the embodiment of claim 7, the fiber-element securing device secures an uncoated fiber element of an optical fiber. For example, as is described in the specification at page 10, lines 9-22, when the fiber-element securing member is displaced to the closed position, the optical fiber is strongly held, receiving the pressure from both holding surfaces.

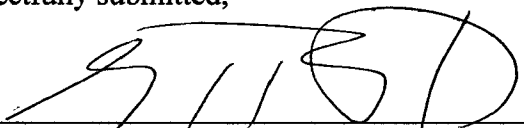
Accordingly, for at least the reasons above, the rejection of claim 7 under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by Huebscher et al has been overcome and should be withdrawn.

Conclusion

In view of the above, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the application is requested. In light of the allowance of claims 1-6, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned should there be any questions or in order to expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

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